

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

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P R 031420Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8110

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

C O N F I D E N T I A L HELSINKI 2447

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PINT, FI

SUBJECT: JUHA VIKATMAA SUICIDE JARS CONSERVATIVE
PARTY

1. LEADER OF FINNISH CONSERVATIVE (NATIONAL COALITION) PARTY'S LEFT-WING, JUHA VIKATMAA, DIED EVENING DECEMBER 2. ACCORDING TO RELIABLE SOURCES HE SHOT HIMSELF. VIKATMAA, 33, WAS TREATED FOR DEPRESSION ABOUT A YEAR AGO BUT HAD JUST WON RE-ELECTION OVER BITTER OPPOSITION AS CHAIRMAN OF HIS DISTRICT AND ACCORDING TO PARTY COLLEAGUES APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD SPIRITS IN RECENT DAYS.

2. BRILLIANT, AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF LAW, AND A MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, VIKATMAA WAS THE INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL LEADER OF THE GROUP OF SEVEN "ANGRY YOUNG MEN" TRYING TO MODERNIZE THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY AND BRING IT BACK INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF FINNISH NATIONAL POLITICS. FOUR OF THE GROUP WERE ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT IN 1970 AND TWO OF THE REMAINING THREE WILL BE LEAVING IN THE NEAR FUTURE-- PARTY VICE CHARIMAN JOUNI MYKKANEN TO THE FINNISH
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BROADCASTING COMPANY NEXT MONTH AND ILKKA

SUOMINEN, FOR FAMILY REASONS, AT THE END OF THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT. ONLY HELSINKI DISTRICT CHAIRMAN PERTTI SALOLAINEN WILL REMAIN. VIKATMAA'S SEAT IN PARLIAMENT WILL BE TAKEN BY ARTO LAMPINEN, A 41-YEAR-OLD LAWYER FROM TURKU, WHO IS MORE IN CENTRE OF PARTY THAN HIS PREDECESSOR.

3. SALOLAINEN TOLD EMBOFF THAT VIKATMAA'S DEATH WILL HAVE PROFOUND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE OF CONSERVATIVE PARTY. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT YET PRECISELY WHAT THESE WILL BE. THE YOUNGER CONSERVATIVES FEAR, HOWEVER, THAT WITHOUT VIKATMAA'S INTELLECTUAL LEADERSHIP THEY MAY LOSE MOMENTUM NEEDED TO MAKE PARTY "ACCEPTABLE" FOR PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT AND THUS HOPE OF FUTURE MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES. THIS IN TURN COULD EFFECT PARTY'S ABILITY TO DRAW YOUNG AND TALENTED PEOPLE INTO ITS RANKS. VIKATMAA WAS ALSO A DRIVING FORCE BEHIND CONSERVATIVE PARTY'S EXCELLENT SHOWING IN RECENT UNIVERSITY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ELECTIONS. KREHBIEL

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